

architecture, to devise dwellings such as the working man ought to inhabit. The Legislature, public bodies, should provide places of healthy, innocent recreation, good for both soul and body, and accessible to the whole population; gratuitous baths, wash-houses, libraries, museums, parks, reading-rooms, gymnasia, concert-rooms—places, in short, where harmless, inexpensive, recreation might successfully enter the lists with debauchery and vice. God knows they would be better, cheaper, more efficient than jails, penitentiaries, panopticons, and patent drops; which, indeed, they would in time replace. Sanitary and moral reforms go together; and as a healthy, cheerful, well-lighted, well-regulated, abode is found cheaper and better, more conducive to health and happiness than one that reeks with dirt, disease, and immorality; so reading-rooms, museums, parks, and picture galleries would be found civilizers, cheaper and better than the silent cell, the gallows, and the scourge. H. McCORMAC, M.D.

Belfast, March 5, 1848.

#### ROYAL INSTITUTE OF BRITISH ARCHITECTS.

A MEETING was held on the 20th instant; when Mr. Eaton Hodgkinson was elected honorary member, and Mr. Thomas Penson and Mr. Edmund Sharpe, M.A., fellows. The honorary secretary announced the following as the subjects proposed for the medals:—

Her Majesty having been pleased to grant her gracious permission for the Royal Medal to be conferred on such distinguished architect or man of science, of any country, as may have designed or executed any building of high merit, or produced a work tending to promote or facilitate the knowledge of architecture, or the various branches of science connected therewith, the Council will in January, 1849, proceed to award the Royal Gold Medal to the author of some literary publication connected with architecture.

The silver medals of the Institute will be awarded—

1. To the best essay on the peculiar characteristics of the Palladian school of architecture, and a comparison and contrast of its elementary principles and details with those of ancient art.

2. On the best manner of covering the roofs and forming the flats and gutters of buildings; the nature of the several materials used in various parts of the country for those purposes; their most effectual and economical application; the inclination to be given to the different parts, and the other practical precautions to be adopted to prevent snow and rain from penetrating into the building.

"The Soane Medallion" to the best design for a building to serve as a national repository and museum for the illustration and exhibition of the productions of the industrial arts.

The successful competitor for this medal, if he go abroad, will be entitled to the sum of 50*l.* at the end of one year's absence, on sending satisfactory evidence of his progress and his studies.

Amongst the books presented were an essay, on "Cyclopean Walls" (*Kyklopiſchen Mauern*), by Dr. Forchhammer; parts of M. Daly's "*Révue Générale de l'Architecture*," and of Mr. Ferguson's beautiful work on Indian architecture. The foreign secretary, in commenting on the donations, pointed attention to an article in the *Révue Générale*, complimentary to the Institute for not restricting the competition for the gold medal to this kingdom.

Allusion was made to the circumstance that all the impressions of Mr. Leitch's translation of Müller's "*Ancient Art and its remains*," (of which a copy was presented to the Institute at the last meeting), had been destroyed by fire.

Amongst the letters read, was one from Herr Lange, of Fülde, acknowledging the honour of his election, and setting forth several subjects on which he could afford information, especially the Carovingian monuments (eighth and ninth century), of his neighbourhood, and a collection of terms in use amongst the workmen of the middle ages.

Mr. T. H. Wyatt then read a paper on the "History, Present Condition, and Proposed Restoration of Llandaff Cathedral," to which we shall refer hereafter.

In the course of a conversation which ensued, Mr. Donaldson objected to the appellation of "Early English," to the style it was used to signify, and thought the "dog-tooth" moulding should have a less absurd designation.—Mr. Chantrell was dis-

posed to attribute the origin of this moulding to the plant *Gallium Cruesiatum*.—Another member said the botanical was better than the canine origin, at all events, but neither was the right,—in which we fully agree.

#### THE ART-UNION OF LONDON AND THE BOARD OF TRADE.

WE have now before us, in a printed form, the whole of the correspondence between Mr. John Lefevre, on the part of the Lords of the Privy Council appointed for matters relating to trade, and Mr. Godwin, for the Council of the Art Union of London, relative to the mischievous interference of that board, who, in ignorantly risking the disorganization of this most important institution, are drawing upon themselves a responsibility of no trifling character. We have already laid before our readers the gist of the arguments on either side,\* and shewn the invalidity of the right the board claim, and the evil of what they require, even if they had the right to do so.

Since then, their lordships, finding that the council would not propose any steps which they conscientiously believed would be injurious, have issued the following general regulations, to apply to a number of bodies (not recognising the difference made between them by the charter already granted to the Art-Union of London) and two additional "Bye-laws," as they please to term them, applying specially to the latter body:—

"REGULATION I.—That from and after the time named for this regulation to come into force, the selection, in the first instance, of works of art, to be afterwards distributed as prizes, shall be intrusted in each Art-Union to a committee, constituted in such manner as shall be decided on by the subscribers in each case.

II.—It is left to each Art-Union to decide for itself in what manner the works of art so selected by the committee shall be afterwards distributed among the prizeholders. The mode adopted is, however, in each, to be subject to the approval of the Board of Trade.

III.—The Committee of Selection, or other body intrusted with the office, is not to be required to choose the works of art from any particular gallery or exhibition.

IV.—The above regulations are not to be binding upon any Art-Union until the distribution of prizes for the year 1848 has taken place, and they are not to apply to that distribution.

V.—Any Art-Union desiring to effect gradual changes in its system or constitution, in order to bring it into harmony with that prescribed in these regulations, is at liberty to present a plan for that purpose to this board, and this board will, if it approve the plan, suspend the regulations as regards such Art-Union for a period of three or four years, as may be necessary.

VI.—Should the special circumstances of any Art-Union to which these rules are applicable render a modification of them expedient, my Lords will take the case of such Union into consideration on a proper representation being made.

VII.—This board does not, by issuing these regulations, waive its right of making such further rules as it may at any time think proper with respect to any of the Art-Unions to which these regulations apply."

These are the Bye-Laws:—

"I.—In the annual distribution of prizes for years 1849, 1850, and 1851 respectively, a certain proportion of the prizes distributed shall consist of pictures, drawings, sculpture, or other works of art, previously selected by a committee, appointed in such manner as a general meeting of the members of the society shall decide, or, in default of such appointment, by the council for the time being, or a committee thereof; and in the distribution for the year 1852, and in all subsequent distributions, the whole of the prizes distributed shall consist of works previously selected in manner aforesaid.

II.—The proportion of prizes to be previously selected in the years 1849, 1850, and 1851, and the mode of distributing the prizes so selected in those or any subsequent years, shall be decided by a general meeting of the members of the society, to be held at least three months before the annual distribution for the year 1849, subject to the approval of the Board of Trade, or of any other Committee of the Privy Council to which the consideration of Art-Unions may at any time be referred."

Throughout the correspondence the council have very properly refused assent to the assumed right of the board to alter the constitution of the association. The Act of Par-

liament expressly refers to Art-Unions conducted on two recognised different principles, and legalises both. According to the Act of Parliament, a duly chartered Art-Union which distributes by lot to the members certain sums of money is legal, as well as one which distributes the works of art themselves, provided only that the money be expended in the purchase of works of art, and the society be carried on in good faith for the encouragement of the fine arts. Whereas the effect of the regulations ordered by their lordships is, in contravention of this, to declare that only one description of Art-Union shall be legal, a power which the council consider it their duty to deny. The necessity for this course is the greater, because of the intimation of constant interference on the part of their lordships conveyed in their last communication,—an interference which must have the effect of annoying and discouraging those by whom the association is conducted, and will tend unquestionably to its ultimate extinction. Mr. Lefevre, in his last letter, says:—"The functions which have been assigned to their lordships by her Majesty, under the Act of Parliament relating to Art-Unions, render it imperative upon them to decide upon the principles on which such societies should be conducted, in order to entitle them to the protection of the Legislature." This we entirely deny. The only function given to the board by the Act, in the case of a chartered body, is that of certifying to her Majesty any perversion of such an association from the purposes of the Act. Their lordships have nothing whatever to do with principles,—the Legislature has itself decided these.

Apart from the question of right, the council have set forth in their letters the reasons for objecting most strenuously to the alterations to the requirement of which the board at present confine themselves.

That each prizeholder should have the right of selecting for himself a work of art from the public exhibition was the fundamental law of the association when first established,—it being considered the most likely to induce large numbers of persons to join the association, and thus to become interested in the arts,—as tending to induce the largest expenditure on works of art,—as best calculated to lead to the education of the public in art, to prevent the influence of favouritism or individual bias in favour of particular classes of art to the injury of others, and in all respects to advance with the most certainty the great objects of the Art-Union of London.

The experience of eleven years has convinced them of the correctness of these views. The objections to this principle (small as opposed to its advantages) are becoming, as was to be expected, less every day, and by the time when, according to the orders of the board, all the prizes are to be selected by a Committee, will for the most part have disappeared.

The council have shewn in their communications to their lordships the great difficulties attending a selection by a committee,—the length of time that would be occupied to obtain the large number of works of art required,—which extra devotion could scarcely be looked for from an unpaid committee,—also the certain dissatisfaction it would give to prizeholders, the consequent decrease of subscribers, and the gradual decay of the association. We hope the council will yet succeed in making the evils of the desired change apparent to the Board of Trade, and that the latter will not persist in a course calculated to destroy an important educational institution. Artists should themselves take steps to strengthen the hands of the council, and aid in preventing what, if it occurred, they would have bitter cause to deplore.

THE "GREAT BRITAIN."—At the meeting of the Great Western Steam-ship Company, at Bristol, last week, the expense attending the recovery of the *Great Britain* was stated to amount, after deducting proceeds of the materials, to 12,670*l.* 14*s.* 1*d.* The estimates for restoring her to the condition she was in previously to her stranding, were, for hull, masts, sails, cabins, boats, anchors, cables, &c., 15,886*l.* 5*s.*; machinery, 5,808*l.*; total, 21,694*l.* 5*s.*

\* See p. 109 ante.